(a) whether Government have recently identified 88 engineering companies for export drive; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) and (b) In response to an initiative taken by the Government, 88 engineering companies have submitted detailed company-wise export action plans. These action plans *inter alia* contain details regarding installed capacity, production, past exports, export projections for the period 1987-88 to 1990-91, market plans, product plans etc.

Appointment of Chairman of Tobacco Board

*114. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the post of Chairman, Tobacco Board is lying vacant for quite some time;

(b) whether some Members of Parliament have written to Government for the filling up of the above post; and

(c) if so, by when the post is likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a).

Signing of memorandum of understanding with the Swiss authorities

*115. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had initiated steps to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Swiss authorities for assistance in specific cases of Indians having accounts in Swiss banks with funds obtained illegally;

(b) whether it is a fact that a six member team of various Ministries had visited Switzerland in this regard and submited its report in October last; and

(c) if so, what sort of agreement/understanding is going to be signed between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) A team comprising representatives of Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Central Bureau of Investigation and the Reserve Bank of India visited Berne (Switzerland) in September, 1987, to explore the possibilities of entering into an arrangement for mutual assistance in criminal matters between the Governments of India and Switzerland. Based on the recommendations of the team, Government is exploring the feasibility of exchange of letters between the two Governments for mutual assistance in criminal matters.

Dowry deaths

*116. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of late there has been an increase in the

incidents of dowry deaths in the country;

(b) if so, the number of newly-wed women who have been killed in the Capital and in the Union Territories during the last one year; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to save the lives of newly-wed women in the country?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) As per available information the number of cases registered as dowry deaths during the years 1986 and 1987 was 1319 and 1418 respectively.

(b) 10 cases of murder for dowry were reported in Delhi and one in Chandigarh during the year, 1987.

(c) The registration, investigation and prevention of crimes fall within the purview of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 has been amended to make the law regarding offences against women stringent. The Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 and Indian Evidence Act, 1872 have also been amended to deal effectively not only with dowry death cases but also with cases of cruelty to married women.

Minerals export policy

*117. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently formulated any minerals export policy; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) and (b) The Export Licensing Policy for the period April 1988—March 1991 for various commodities, including minerals, is expected to be announced in April, 1988.

Withdrawal of import duty on waste paper

*118. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the All India Small Paper Mills Association has recently urged the Central Government to withdraw the 10 per cent import duty on waste paper and sought complete excise exemption for small paper mills for the initial production of 7500 tonnes in view of the severe financial crisis being faced by these units;

(b) whether it is also a fact that 80 out of a total of 270 such units have been closed down and that 60 per cent of the remaining units are on the verge of closure; and

(c) if so, what is Government reaction thereto and what relief measures are proposed to be taken to save the small paper mills from financial crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the available information as on the 1st January, 1988, out of 295 units in the country engaged in the production of paper and paperboard 67 units have not been reporting production for the last two years. A majority of these units are in the small scale sector.

(c) The matter is under examination for appropriate action.

Plying of cycle rickshaws in the walled city

119. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to prohibit the plying of cycle rickshaws within the walled city of Delhi and to replace it by three wheelers; and